

Message Text

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ACTION EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY MANAMA BAHRAIN

TO SECSTATE WASHINGTON DC 2795

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E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS : ENRG, BA

SUBJECT : ENERGY AND ENERGY POLICY (C-SI-6-59611)

REF : (A) STATE A-385 DATED JANUARY 23, 1976,
(B) 75 KUWAIT 2504, (C) 75 KUWAIT 5424,
(D) MANAMA A-27 DATED JUNE 16, 1975

1. BACKGROUND: BAHRAIN IS NET IMPORTER OF CRUDE OIL FOR ITS 250,000 BPD REFINERY. IN 1975, AVERAGE DAILY CRUDE PRODUCTION WAS ABOUT 59,000 BARRELS. BAHRAIN IS NOT A MEMBER OF OPEC. PETROLEUM RESERVES ARE EXPECTED TO BE EXHAUSTED IN 12-15 YEARS, GIVEN CURRENT RATES OF PRODUCTION. BAHRAIN HAS SOME RESERVES OF NON-ASSOCIATED GAS WHICH PROVIDES ENERGY FOR LOCAL INDUSTRIES (SEE REF D), BUT WHICH HAS NOT BEEN DISCOVERED IN EXPORTABLE QUANTITIES. THE ONLY PROJECT OF WHICH EMBASSY IS AWARE FOR DIVERSIFYING BAHRAIN'S ENERGY RESOURCES IS THE PROPOSED JOINT KUWAITI/SAUDI ARABIAN/BAHRAINI NUCLEAR PROJECT (SEE REF B AND C).

2. RESERVES:

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(A) PETROLEUM: AT CURRENT LEVELS OF PRODUCTION, THE

GOB EXPECTS ITS OIL RESERVES TO BE EXHAUSTED IN 12-15 YEARS, BARRING FRESH DISCOVERIES. EXPLORATION, BOTH ONSHORE BY THE BAHRAIN PETROLEUM COMPANY (BAPCO) AND OFFSHORE BY BAPCO AND SUPERIOR OIL COMPANY, HAS THUS FAR PROVED FRUITLESS.

(B) NON-ASSOCIATED NATURAL GAS: 1975 PRODUCTION AMOUNTED TO SLIGHTLY MORE THAN 102 BILLION CUBIC FEET AND RESERVES, THOUGHT TO BE 8-11 TRILLION, ARE EXPECTED TO LAST 50-75 YEARS AT CURRENT LEVELS OF CONSUMPTION. STUDIES ARE GOING ON, WITH IBRD AID, TO EXPLORE FURTHER POSSIBLE RESERVES. THE NATURAL GAS IS NOW USED BY THE ALUMINUM SMELTER, FOR COMMERCIAL PRODUCTION OF ELECTRICITY, FOR REFINERY FUEL AND FOR GAS INJECTION TO MAINTAIN PRESSURE IN THE OIL RESERVOIR.

(C) COAL: THERE ARE NO KNOWN COAL RESERVES IN BAHRAIN.

3. INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION PLANS: IN THE ABSENCE OF MAJOR NEW DISCOVERIES OF EITHER OIL OR NATURAL GAS RESERVES, THE GOVERNMENT OF BAHRAIN PLANS NOT TO EXPAND ITS INDUSTRIAL BASE SIGNIFICANTLY IN THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE. THE GOVERNMENT IS ACUTELY AWARE OF ITS LIMITED ENERGY RESERVES AND THE CONSTRAINTS THAT PLACES ON ANY PLANS FOR INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION. ANOTHER SIGNIFICANT PROBLEM OF COURSE IS THE MANPOWER SHORTAGE.

4. ALTERNATE SOURCES: THE ONLY PROJECT OF WHICH THIS EMBASSY IS AWARE IS THE STILL QUITE TENTATIVE PLAN TO DEVELOP JOINT KUWAIT/SAUDI ARABIA/BAHRAIN NUCLEAR POWER PLANT TO BE LOCATED IN DAMMAM, EASTERN PROVINCE, SAUDI ARABIA (SEE REF B AND C). WE ASSUME THIS PROJECT WOULD BE FINANCED PRIMARILY BY KUWAIT AND SAUDI ARABIA WITH BAHRAIN PARTICIPATING AS A MODEST CONSUMER AND TOKEN CONTRIBUTOR.

5. TRAINING: BAHRAIN HAS NO SOPHISTICATED SCIENTIFIC TRAINING INSTITUTIONS; THERE IS NO UNIVERSITY OR OTHER SIGNIFICANT RESEARCH FACILITY. BAHRAINIS STUDY IN SAUDI ARABIA (THE UNIVERSITY OF PETROLEUM MINERALS IN DHAHRAN), KUWAIT, OTHER ARAB COUNTRIES, UNITED KINGDOM AND THE UNITED STATES, AS WELL AS THE SOVIET UNION AND OTHER EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, BUT AS FAR AS WE ARE AWARE, NONE IS DOING ORIGINAL RESEARCH THAT MIGHT CONCEIVABLY HAVE AN IMPACT ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC WORLD.

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6. BILATERAL AGREEMENTS IN SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY: BAHRAIN HAS RECENTLY CONCLUDED BILATERAL ECONOMIC AGREEMENTS WITH SEVERAL NEIGHBORING STATES. FROM THE BAHRAINI POINT OF VIEW, THE IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF THESE AGREEMENTS DEAL WITH TRADE AND COMMERCE, CUSTOMS REGULATIONS AND PROPERTY RIGHTS. WHILE IN EACH CASE THERE IS ALSO RITUALISTIC MENTION OF MUTUAL EXCHANGE OF SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNOLOGICAL INFORMATION,

WE ATTRIBUTE MINIMUM PRACTICAL SIGNIFICANCE TO THESE UNDER-
TAKINGS.

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